

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 NEA-10

DHA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5306

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 2986

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PORG, UNGA

SUBJECT: STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS HIGH COMMISSIONER PROPOSAL

1. THE NORWEGIAN MISSION HOSTED A MEETING SEPT. 7 TO DISCUSS RESULTS OF CONSULTATIONS ON THE HIGH COMMISSIONER PROPOSAL. REPORTS FROM PARTICIPATING LATIN AND WESTERN STATES INDICATE THAT THE PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE HIGH COMMISSIONER PROPOSAL ARE AS FOLLOWS: (1) IT'S AN OLD IDEA THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN DEFEATED (USSR). (2) IT REPRESENTS AN ATTEMPT TO INTERFERE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MOVE BEYOND STANDARD-SETTING AND COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENTS (USSR, BRAZIL). (3) IT WILL SURELY PROVOKE A SUPER-POWER CONFRONTATION, RECALLING THE PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES (MANY NON-ALIGNED DON'T WANT TO GET CAUGHT IN BETWEEN). (4) IT IS A WEOG AND US PROPOSAL, ROOTED IN A WESTERN UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS THAT IGNORES THAT UNDERDEVELOPED SITUATION OF THE NON-ALIGNED. (5) IT IS AN UNNECESSARY FURTHER PROLIFERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANS, SINCE THERE ARE ALREADY TOO MANY THAT ARE NOT EFFICIENT. THE THING TO DO IS TO MAKE THE EXISTING ONES MORE EFFICIENT. (6) IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND A SINGLE PERSON WHO

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WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO EVERYONE, WHO COULD BE IMPARTIAL AND RESPECTED, AND BE CONCERNED WITH ALL HUMAN RIGHTS. (7) IT IS TOO AMBITIOUS A PROPOSAL, BETTER TO GO STEP-BY-STEP, (IRAN AND NEW ZEALAND). (8) SINCE THE PROPOSAL HAS NO CHANCE, THE THING TO DO IS DROP IT AND CONTINUE STANDARD-SETTING (IMPLICIT SWEDISH POSTURE).

2. THE STRATEGY THAT HAS EVOLVED IN THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP (HCHRWG) IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS: (1) THE PROPOSAL AND THE INFORMAL AIDE MEMOIRE SHOULD BE PRESENTED AS BEING OPEN TO AMENDMENTS AND CRITICISMS TO ATTRACT OTHER NATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ONGOING PROCESS OF FORMULATION OF BOTH THE TEXT AND THE STRATEGY. (2) AT LEAST AT THIS STAGE, WE SHOULD SEEK CONSENSUS, WHICH MEANS SPECIFICALLY SEEKING TO APPROACH THE PROBABLE OPPONENTS AND FIND OUT THEIR OBJECTIONS, AND, IF POSSIBLE, MEET THEM. (3) THE US SHOULD MAINTAIN A LOW PROFILE, AND ASSURE EVERYONE THAT THOUGH WE WILL WORK VERY HARD FOR THIS PROPOSAL, AND WANT A MEANINGFUL ONE, WE WILL NOT BE DRAWN INTO POLEMICS WITH "ANOTHER SUPERPOWER" OVER THE ISSUE. (4) EVERY NATION SHOULD BE APPROACHED WITH A REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION AND COMMENTS. (5) ESPECIALLY AFRICAN CO-SPONSORS SHOULD BE SOUGHT AT THIS STAGE, AND THE HOPE EXPRESSED THAT A CAUCUS OF AFRICAN NATIONS CAN BE FORMED BY THEM TO (A) EXAMINE THE PROPOSAL AND MAKE SUGGESTIONS, (B) AT A LATER STAGE SEEK ARAB AND ASIAN CO-SPONSORS, AND (C) FINALLY, IF THE PROPOSAL PASSES, NOMINATE TO THE AFRICAN REGIONAL GROUP OR THE SYG AN AFRICAN CANDIDATE FOR THE POSITION, IN THE EXPECTANCY THAT THERE WILL BE WEO AND LATIN AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR AN AFRICAN HIGH COMMISSIONER.

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3. THE NEXT STEP WILL BE A MEETING SEPT. 15 HOSTED BY NORWAY TO WHICH ANY INTERESTED THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES WILL BE INVITED. WESTERN ATTENDANCE WILL BE LIMITED TO NORWAY, ITALY, AUSTRALIA AND COSTA RICA SO THAT THIRD WORLD REPRESENTATIVES DO NOT FEEL OVERWHELEMED BY THE WESTERN PRESENCE.

4. IN ADDITION, WESTERN STATES WILL BE RAISING THE ISSUE WITH THE USSR TO EVALUATE THE PROBABLE SOVIET STANCE. THE BELGIANS REPORTED THEY WILL RAISE THE ISSUE AT THEIR BI-LATERAL TALKS WITH THE SOVIETS NEXT WEEK. THE MISSION EXPECTS TO INFORMALLY RAISE THIS MATTER--AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES GENERALLY-- WITH SENIOR SOVIETS DURING OUR SCHEDULED BILATERALS WITH THEM AT THE END OF THIS WEEK.

LEONARD

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Message Attributes

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